

# Welcome

Type a word in the chat to describe the emotion you are feeling as you arrive today

How are  
you arriving  
today?



# Today's learning intentions



To introduce the different levels of listening



To understand why listening, empathy and relationship building are leadership skills



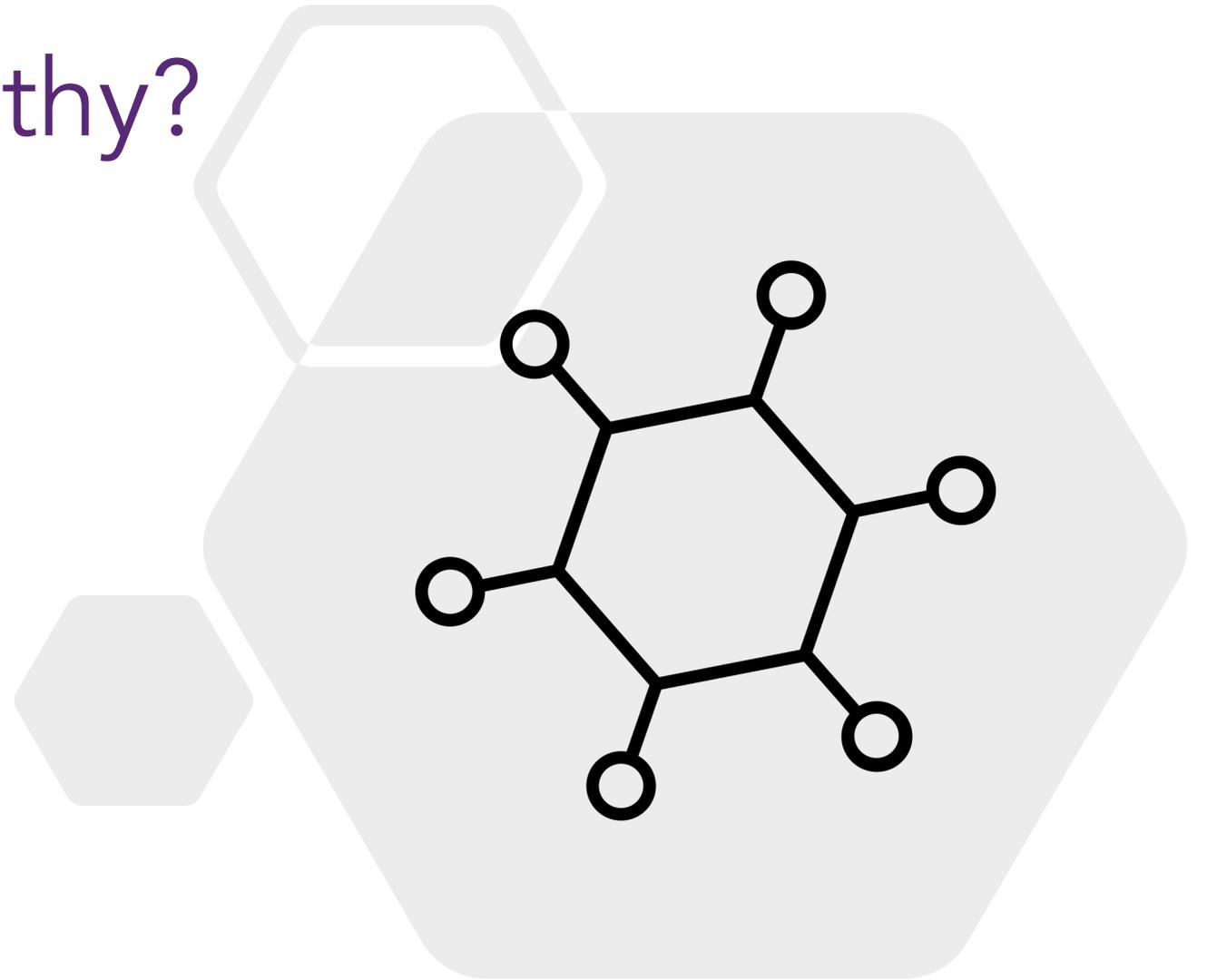
To develop your listening skills for building relationships



To develop an intentional approach to empathy

# Why Relationship Building and Empathy?

- Systems thinking requires us to have an open mindset
- Systems change requires multiple viewpoints
- Systems activists need to be curious, challenge assumptions, understand others



# What are the core skills required to build relationships and develop empathy?

- Listening
- Listening
- Listening!

When do you use listening skills as  
system changers?

# When do we use listening skills as system changers?

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To understand people - their motivations, values, interests

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To build public relationships

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To broaden our perspectives

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To share stories

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To facilitate change conversations

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To negotiate outcomes

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*"We completely underestimate the power of human conversation to change the world"*

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*"Very great change starts from very small conversations, held among people who care. ..."*

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*"Listening is such a simple act. It requires us to be present, and that takes practice, but we don't have to do anything else. We don't have to advise or coach ..."*

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Dr Margaret Wheatley



# Listening exercise 1

- In your pairs, hold a relational conversation.
- The purpose is to figure out the “why” of the person you are talking to, by inviting them to tell you what motivates them, carries meaning for them and connects them to the community they live in and the work they do.
- Be curious. Draw out their stories. Look for where their values or interests connect with yours and where they differ.
- Try out different questions to see what ‘lands’.
- You have 20 minutes. Make sure you both have speaking and listening time.
- Back at 3.40

# Good Listening

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Making space

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Showing you are listening

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Reflecting back

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Not interrupting

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Curiosity

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Exploring with open questions

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What else?

# Listening Exercise 2

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In groups of 3, agree who is A, B and C

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A will be given 2 minutes to talk *without interruption* on their chosen topic.

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B will listen for the 'facts' expressed by A in their talk.

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C will listen for the 'feelings' expressed by A in their talk.

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(If there is a 4th member, D, their role will be simply to observe this round)

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*Nobody speaks except for A, even if A runs out of things to say before the 2 minutes are up.)*

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Once A has had their 2 minutes to speak, B has 1 minute to summarise back the 'facts' expressed by A during their talk, & then..

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C has 1 minute to summarise back the 'feelings' expressed by A during their talk.

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(In a group of 4, D simply observes but can note any observations for later)

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Swap roles and repeat

---

Swap roles and repeat

---

You have 20 minutes. Return at 4.25

What was easier , listening for facts  
or feelings?

# 4 LEVELS OF LISTENING

**LISTENING 1:** DOWNLOADING  
HABITS OF JUDGEMENT



RECONFIRMING  
OLD OPINIONS &  
JUDGEMENTS

**LISTENING 2:** FACTUAL  
NOTICING DIFFERENCES

OPEN  
MIND



DISCONFIRMING  
(NEW) DATA

**LISTENING 3:** EMPATHIC  
EMOTIONAL CONNECTION

OPEN  
HEART



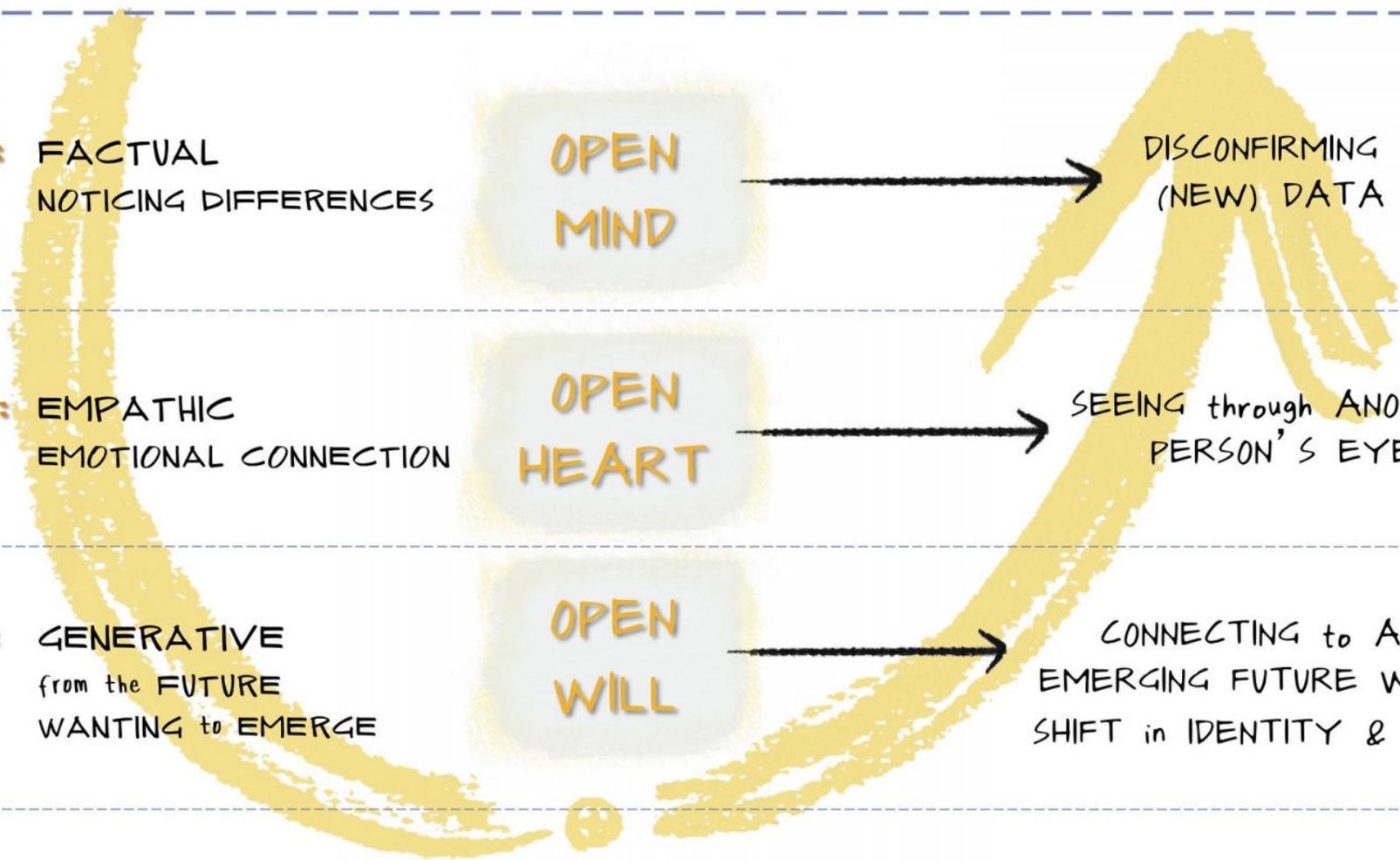
SEEING through ANOTHER  
PERSON'S EYES

**LISTENING 4:** GENERATIVE  
from the FUTURE  
WANTING to EMERGE

OPEN  
WILL



CONNECTING to AN  
EMERGING FUTURE WHOLE:  
SHIFT in IDENTITY & SELF



# Empathy Bingo

Interrogating	One-Upping	Advising	Correcting
Consoling	Shutting Down	Educating	Sympathising
Explaining	Fixing It	Empathising	Storytelling

# What Empathy is NOT

- Fix It** "What will help is..."
- Advise** "I think you should..."
- Interrogate** "How did it happen?"
- Explain** "She said that only because..."
- Correct** "That's not how it was..."
- Educate** "You can learn from this..."
- Console** "It wasn't your fault."
- Commiserate** "He did that to you, that jerk!"
- One Up** "You should hear what happened to..."
- Telltale** "That reminds me of the time..."
- Evaluate** "If you hadn't been so rude..."
- Sympathize** "You poor thing!"  
I feel awful for you."

# What is Empathy?

Empathy is

*a deep appreciation for another's situation and point of view.*

not just “feeling what another person feels”; it is, rather,

*thinking and feeling what you perceive the other person thinks and feels.*

demonstrating your appreciation



# Modes of Empathy



Cognitive - putting ourselves in someone's shoes (head)



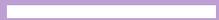
Perceptive - recognising non-verbal cues (heart)



Behavioural - offering verbal & non-verbal responses (hands)

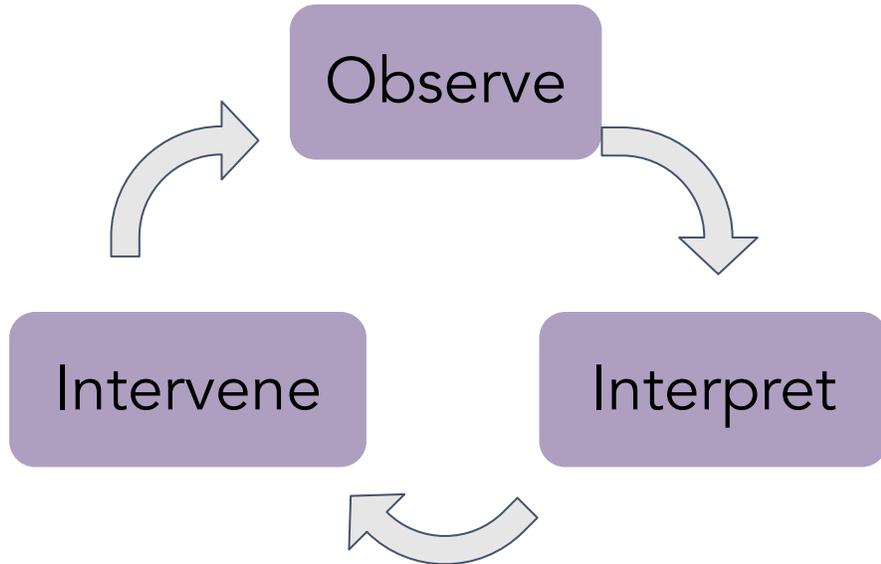
# Homework!

Pick someone you don't get on with and try to stand in their shoes.



# Personal Reflection

Leadership in complex systems requires constant learning.



## Reflection Activity

**Observe:** Notice what you don't understand about someone you don't get on with

**Interpret:** Try to empathise with them. Consider how your feelings about them affect your relationship with them

**Intervene:** How might you interact with them differently in the future?

